

Volume 1, Number 5, April 10, 1985

# OtherWise

A Feminist Newspaper at U of T

SUPPLEMENT ON  
THEORY AND CRITICISM



Carrie Stott

Sex Ed Centre:

## Making It On Their Own

Independence One Year After

by Carla-krystin Andrade and

David Turner

There have been many changes at the Sex-Ed Centre since it opened in March 1980. Some changes, such as location and the addition of new services, were positive; others were less so. The new source of funding and the organizational structure that came into being this year are changes that will allow the Sex-Ed Centre to serve its clients better in the years to follow.

The pro-life - pro-choice conflict which is currently taking place off-campus today is not unique, while SAC-SEC was funded by the SAC. Shortly after the Centre opened in March 1977, the U of T Pro-Life Group began to stir up controversy. In a letter to the campus paper they accused SAC-SEC of being anti-abortion by funding SAC-SEC and refusing to fund them. St. Mike's joined the fray and the pressure that they put of SAC resulted in the formation of the BAD-SEC Committee to control SAC policy and restrict abortion and pregnancy counselling. The

last of such restrictions occurred in November '83, when all pregnancy and abortion counselling at SEC was forbidden; counsellors could only give callers four phone numbers (two pro-life and two pro-choice), and end the consultation.

These restrictions are now history, since SAC no longer funds the Sex-Ed Centre and the SAC-SEC Committee no longer exists.

The SEC Management Committee has replaced the SAC-SEC Committee and is now composed of students from Innis, Victoria, and New Colleges and the GGU. This union and SEC's new-found autonomy are auspicious and well-received changes. Meetings now focus on ways of improving the Centre's services rather than curtailting them, and our energy is no longer wasted on countering attacks.

Our independence has allowed us to change our organizational structure from an 'enlightened hierarchy' to a collective. This change was proposed by a group of

Continued on page 8

## Daring to be A Priest like Her

Emmanuel Debates  
Destiny of 'Crucified Woman'

by Ingrid MacDonald

Ever since Woolf pondered the tragic life and death of Shakespeare's sister in *A Room of One's Own*, the complementary notion, that Jesus eight have had a sister as well has probably been lurking in the imaginations of many a heretical religious will. Those of you who spent your adolescence as I did, hiding in your bedrooms while mournful female voices crooned from head-down turntable, will remember a singer who brought new meaning to the word *icon*, Dori Previn. Previn wrote her best songs about death, and death by hanging in particular. She also got it together to write a brilliantly mischievous blues song wherein Mother Mary's daughter asks "What about me? Only to have her offer her to her brother. "He's the Chief! He's the Boss! He's the Man on the Cross! Did Jesus have a sister? Did he give her a chance?"

Artist Almut Luttenhaus, a German native who now lives in Canada, has sculpted a statue called *Crucified Woman*. In 1984 she donated a copy of the sculpture to U of T's Emmanuel College, thus beginning months of emotionally charged debate among the members of the college as they attempted to decide whether or not to accept the artist's gift.

In a straw vote taken last fall, the college was divided right down the middle: 39 voted to accept the statue, 40 against.

Emmanuel's *Zeitschrift* their in-house newsletter facilitated in print much of the dialogue, and a spectrum of different views appeared there.

A considerable amount of attention in the criticism of the *Crucified Woman* focused on the role of art as a way of understanding God. One woman felt that any representation of God is an imposition of "intentions" upon the viewer. Others felt that it was significant that the piece of art had been declared "competent, but not brilliant". The same author then explains that she would like to see male chauvinists "scuttling about in our halls", instead any pro-feminist males. She curiously describes the latter as the "pandering yes-man".

Another artist responded to drawing of the sculpture, and described it among other things as, "A harsh accusatory finger pointing at the white-middle class male, saying, 'You have put me here'."

A third submission came from a woman who wrote a moving and brave letter describing her experience of the *Crucified Woman*. Her letter describes how her experience of God and about her need to know Christ as a healer; they shared this understanding, "I have been touched and healed by a bled and broken hand," she writes. To her the image of Christ as a woman on the Cross is a logical and necessary conclusion, given that woman's suffering and Christ's "tumble over each other". To conclude she writes, "The saddest thing for me about the *Crucified Woman* is perhaps that you have to be a woman to see Christ Jesus in her, our sister."

When I contacted the registrar's office this week, they were able to tell me that the Emmanuel College Council had officially accepted the statue on February 6th of this year. Her location is yet to be decided.

## MORE OTHERWISE

### • Being All Things To All People

Vaughn asks literature a Freudian question, page 3

### • One Should Always Do As the Enigma Lady Does,

MacDonald, page 8

### • "Are those some guys writin' in OtherWise?" "No way I don't believe it" See for yourself, page 6

## EDITORIAL

We could say we've learned a lot, that we've worked hard, we could even go so far as to say it's been a good year. Starting with nothing but ideas, anxiety and the determination left to be born into Women's Movement, we have established a feminist voice on campus, in the city, and beyond. We have developed and now include a theme every issue giving us focus while still allowing freedom to experiment within the newspaper format. We have learned a lot of self-efficacy by doing our own typesetting, through advertising, donations, and bequests we have managed to stay afloat, financially independent of any organization of institution.

Our work doesn't stop here. Otherwise set itself up as a forum for feminist experimentation. Over the summer, we plan to hold meetings to evaluate what has been done, and plan for the future. During this period, we hope new members will appear, bringing fresh ideas and prophetic vision, to join us for more conversation and cold beer. Since we continue to organize collectively, we stress that you can determine your own level of involvement in the paper. In short, we hope that everybody will feel welcome.

Finally, thanks for supporting OtherWise, have a good summer, and don't get caught. Now, to our Theory and Criticism supplement.

Feminism is a movement that seeks social, economic, and political change, but the first step is to recognize a need for change. Our function of theory is to locate an individual woman's experience in her culture within a theoretical framework which renders visible the connections between a culture and institutions and one individual's life. The theories which we formulate inform our strategies.

Looking beyond and beneath the surface of our problems requires a theoretical approach. Feminist theories can stem from almost any established school of thought, for instance socialism, liberalism, Marxism or psychoanalysis. On the other hand, there may be parallels to feminism, such as "radical" feminism, implicitly or explicitly we must invoke some sort of theoretical framework when approaching practical issues, just as practical work provides a theoretical framework, theory and practice inform each other dialectically. As a socialist feminist must think about women's diverse economic situations, when strategizing about abortion; and practical work such as setting the abortion clinic has provided much theorizing about control of reproduction.

The women of the OtherWise collective hold many and diverse political opinions. We believe that our diversity is part of the strength of our collective. It is the strength of the feminist movement. There is a tendency for those not closely tied to the feminist movement to imagine that a feminist's political thought is a modification of liberal thought. Although the concept of "equal rights" is very important, it is not all-encompassing because we just can't figure out how we give men equal access to abortion. Similarly is not a woman any general as abhorrent as a male but then not all feminists are pacifists...

## Can't Afford A Vacation?

OtherWise will be having  
summer meetings so drop us a card  
"Keep in touch.... keep in touch"

Yes, that's right, Mr. McMann... I said, "May I go to the Women's Room?"



Jennifer McNamee

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## Letters

## Dear OtherWise,

I found Terry Testor's essay "Keep Your Mind Off My Body, March 7) thoughtful and thought-provoking. But I'd like to ask a few other feminist questions. What makes you think that all men have nasty thoughts when they look at a slimmed-down woman in Sports Illustrated or a naked woman in Playboy (interviews)? I find it insulting to be told that I am virtually a sexist if I should find such a woman sexually attractive.

I have no use for material that suggests exploitation of, or violence against, women. It is unacceptable to most people that this form sex per se, or even good old-fashioned lust. It is a sad fact, but true, that many men are terribly frustrated in their desire to be closer to women, and sexually explicit material provides a vehicle for fantasized intimacy.

High school students assumed that sex is something each do to women. Can it be that biology reinforces cultural perception that women are more passive than men? I am here to tell you that is not true. I am here to avoid the impression that A is "active" and B is "passive". In this very narrow sense women era by nature more passive than they are always in the receiving end. But of course this is hardly an adequate view of sexual interaction, and it raises the question: Who, specifically, would the OtherWise collective admit as "acceptable" and non-exploitative? I am not sexually explicit, visual depictions of a nude woman or of sexual activity between women and a man. I am say drawing or photograph that shows a woman ready to receive a man sexually, or actually engaged in (oral or genital sex). I honestly sexist talk of "mutually sexed" is all very fine, but what does it mean in graphic terms - holding hands on a beach at sunset? Does it mean there has to be at least two people in every picture? Your's, Don Cartwright

Dear OtherWise,  
One Christmass, when I was six years old, my brother received a bright red pedal sports car and I got a doll. My sisters and I were very angry at the unfairness of the situation, but could not understand why it had occurred. As I grew up I became even more aware of the differences in treatment towards men and women, and I began to question as to the reasons for the way things were. The big shock occurred when I changed from a private school to public school. At the girls' school I played every sport possible, but when I arrived at the co-ed school the girls had half the variety of teams as the boys and we were stuck in the smaller gym. Finally, after a year of aggression, I struck out. I wrote a feminist column in the school newspaper - "Saxism" (signed at N.T.) All this time I had been alone in my confusion and isolation, until when I arrived at U of T I found others with a similar feminist consciousness. I joined the "Coalition for a Women's Centre" and attended the first meeting of OtherWise newspaper. The thrill of hearing others talk about the injustice I had been feeling all these years is indescribable. The path to change is a long one, but it doesn't have to be alone. I don't have to travel it alone. Yours in Sisterhood (finally)  
Catherine Fitter  
Trinity, 1

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# What Does Literature Want?

by Kathleen Vaughan

"The great question that has never been answered and which I have not yet been able to answer, despite my thirty years of research into the soul of literature, is 'What does literature want?'"

So Sigmund Freud, father of psychoanalysis, almost says to Princess Marie Bonaparte, his pupil, fellow psychoanalyst and sometime literary critic, and so close to our discipline of psychoanalysis and literature.

Freud's writings attest to his own interest in and debt to literature, which he approaches in various ways, as though attempting to surround and lay siege to the sacred city. Freud turns his psychoanalytic spotlight on the author, the character, the text, and the reader. He reconstructs the psyches of Dostoevsky, da Vinci, and Michelangelo using their creative products. He borrows from literature to develop his psychoanalytic theories; he is indebted to Oedipus and Hamlet (if he hadn't existed, would he have necessary for Freud to invent them and who is to say that he didn't?). He even makes a stab at some kind of reader-response theory in essays such as "Creative Writing and Daydreaming," in which he anticipates some form of textual analysis. In his discussion of jokes ( *Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious*), Freud approaches literature to lay the groundwork for the tactic psychoanalytic literary critics and theorists have used to attempt to answer that age-old question, what does literature want?

Freud's approaches to literature lay the groundwork for the tactic psychoanalytic literary critics and theorists have used to attempt to answer that age-old question, what does literature want? Princess Marie cashes in on the romantic cult of the author by using both biography and literary products to develop her well-known psychoanalytic portrait of Edgar Allan Poe. Literature wants to de-throne its gods.

Critics such as Ernst Kris psychanalyse Shakespeare's Prince Hal. Literature wants to be real.

David Bisch and other reader-response critics suggest that the reader's own psychic processes — repressions, narcissism — determine a subjective literature meaning.

Literature wants to be all things to all people.

Close textual analysis is used by psychoanalytic critics from all schools to support their views. For example, Norman Holland, drawing on Freud's theory of dream symbolism, asserts that Macbeth's "Tomorrow" soliloquy is in fact a reassurance to the neurotic child that children that do not burn in the night are not his parents, engaging in x-rated sports. Literature wants to be an undercover agent.

More recently, a critic heralded Shoshana Felman's proposal that the model for literary criticism is the psychoanalytic process itself: the critic or reader, like the psychoanalyst, uncovers the hidden meanings of texts through a reconstructive process similar to the psychoanalytic. Literature wants to be in therapy.

Post-war intellectual trends have prompted

reassessment of both psychoanalysis and literature, and so new answers to our question. French psychoanalysts have undertaken to "return Freud to Freud" (like putting the pep back in Pepto-Bismol), rereading the texts to develop revised theories of psychotherapy and reader-response patterns. Lacan develops a language-based psychoanalysis by using two main theories: Freud's assertion that the unconscious is structured like a language, and semiotics. Literature, in its active, reflexive way, wants to be Lacan.

Lacan influences psychoanalysis, French feminism, and literary theory. Everyone is made for language — feminists like Luce Irigaray do intrinsically sexual readings of Freud's theory of femininity; post-structuralists like Jacques Derrida perform analyses of texts in which language, like a black hole, sucks objective meaning into irretrievably into a parallel universe.

The *Kind-Body Problem*, Rebecca Goldstein's unconvincing first novel (Dell, 1985), suggests a reason for the linguistic turn of mind.

Language is humanly manufactured and thus, presumably, thoroughly intelligible. The questions it poses might be difficult but were not, in principle, unanswerable. No one is so inexhaustible that reality can contend with and make us feel our human limitations. No more dark, inaccessible regions living beyond the reach of reason's phallic thrusts.... No more boogymen jumping out of dark corners shouting "It can't be known! You'll never understand it!" These epistemological horrors used to be the waiting at every philosophical turn. Now the nursery lamp of linguistic analysis has been turned on,

dispelling all those scary shadows. There is the bright, cheery world of the nursery, small and familiar, with no sense of the unknown creeping in.

However, part of the attraction of language for theorists does seem to be that although distractingly familiar, it remains disconcertingly unpredictable. Meaning escapes with a pull of the chain of signification.

What do these redefinitions of our intellectual playground mean for the strange conjunctive relationship between psychoanalysis and literature? What new insights they provide to the question, what does literature want? Freud provides a pseudo-commentary: "Throughout history, people have knocked their heads against the middle of the nature of literature — nor will you have escaped worrying over this problem, those of you who are psychoanalysts; to those of you who are literary critics this will not apply — you are yourselves the problem".

Literature, literary critics thus are cast as problematic Oedipal daughters to the Father, the Law of Psychoanalysis. In this scenario, what would literature want, then, but to seduce the Father and so acquire the Phallus of interpretation? All literature, among others, has come to rethink and to reject the hierarchical family structures. A great fanfare reveals that the meaning of the phallus is that everyone, regardless of sex or affiliation, suffers from penis envy. Psychoanalysis hesitates, shuffles uncertainly, and begins to eye jealously literature's *je-ne-sais-quoi* — its jouissance, perhaps? Psychoanalysis wants to be literature.

Perhaps a new kind of dialogue between psychoanalysis and literature is becoming possible, one suggested by the Cuban, sometimes deconstructionist, Shoshana Felman. As editor of the Yale French Studies special issue on literature and psychoanalysis, Felman proposes that we read *otherwise*. She urges that we recognize the differences between — the Other — in literature and psychoanalysis, and that we establish a new, another way of approaching the relationship between the two fields.

How does she answer the question, what does literature want? She complicates the issue by suggesting that literature is the unconscious of psychoanalysis. And what would psychoanalysis want? Perhaps the unconscious wants? Perhaps to have us read *otherwise*.

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# Literary Splashes in Pivotal Works from

## This Bridge Called My Back, 1981

by Carla-krystin Aastad

This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Colour.

Editor: Gloria Anzaldua and Gloria Hernández. This Bridge Called My Back to reflect an "unconscious definition of feminism by Women of Colour in the United States, and it does. Anger with racist treatment as a feminist retreat was the original impetus behind Cherie Horoga's decision to compile this anthology. In so doing she and the women who contributed to it have made visible the reality of their own experience and the responses of "their own feminism". As a result, This Bridge Called My Back is not a tirade about racism; it is a thoughtful analysis of the way in which women of color perceive themselves and the way in which they are treated by the feminist movement. Throughout the six sections of poetry, prose and personal narrative, the women reclaim their power and the dignity of their bodies. The book is a contribution to political theory, but it also questions the validity of existing structures, but not without offering possible solutions or at least attempting to expose the existence of these structures. This book was meant to be a challenge to white feminists to acknowledge and examine their racist attitudes and oppressive behaviour, and to women of color to examine themselves were racism.

Feminist theory claims to oppose racism, yet these women of color say that the women's movement is racist. This may be unavoidable, given the primarily white middle class membership of the women's movement, and their ensuing biases. Doris Davenport thinks that white women may be acting like other oppressed or colonized groups in adopting a "militant stance" when they react to racism. The problem is that the white feminists will not acknowledge their racism and the fact that they have privilege because of their color, or rather their lack thereof; that they refuse to admit that they can afford to deal with racism as an intellectual bonus, whereas women of color cannot.

Racism is an important issue in this book. Women of color are often treated as a feminist issue, the subject of theory. This victimizer stance is reinforced by the fact that, while white feminists write about women of color, they do not include them and the experiences they bring with them, in the formulation of feminist theory. As a result, women of color feel written out of feminist theory. They also feel tokenized by white feminists, treated as though they are only responsible for information about women of color and have nothing to contribute to the rest of feminist theory.

To counteract this racism women of color postulated a Third World feminism, so that they could channel their energy towards themselves and make racism and oppressions particular to themselves a priority. Based on the premise that "the most political action is to change their political reality from the realities of the various groups of women of color. They showed how this task would be fraught with difficulties because of the diversity of the groups that fall into the category "Women of Color", tensions between these groups, homophobia, ignorance of feminism, and, worst of all, their internalization of other's racist attitudes. This internalization made them question the importance of their culture, lives and histories. They tried to change the way they thought about themselves, which in turn casted the question of the validity of seeing that can feminism.

Some were in favour of a Third World feminism, and felt that they should not have to be responsible for educating white feminists about women of color. Others felt that while separation was useful for asserting one's identity, what really radical is trying to make room for people from different backgrounds.

The concept of a Third World feminism is still valid, in view of the fact that racism still exists within the women's movement, and that, despite women of color putting pen to paper, their needs are not being met by the "feminist" movement. In the meantime the difficulties in establishing a women's movement unchanged. In the preface to a later edition of the book Cherie Horoga admits that "the idea of Third World feminism has proved to be much easier between the covers of a book than between real live women. Today the dream feels more remote, but, she says, "this is precisely when the real work begins".

OtherWise wishes to thank the Canadian Women's Movement



## Going Too Far, 1978

by Kate Lasier

Going Too Far, published in 1978, is a collection of Robin Morgan's writings which date from the late sixties and the beginning of the "women's liberation movement" to the mid-seventies. Reading it feels like going through someone's also a scrapbook where torn pieces of letters, a weekly column to her husband, fragments of journals, published newspaper articles, a play, transcribed speeches, and a treatise on feminist metaphysics.

To cushion the ride, Morgan considerately gives a guided tour. It reads something like this: "Up ahead you'll read how in 1970 I rejected the idea of the E.R. because it wasn't women I was with, it was misgivings about the way it participated, lived and self-consciously behaved in the presence of my sisters... And isn't it?" The older and wiser Morgan of the present has learned from her mistakes, is embarrassed by her younger self and goes to great lengths to account for her.

Morgan is indignantly sarcastic; she admits her pals, her insecurities and despises. Her honesty is seductive; the reader can lend an ear, as a confidant, except without questioning her perceptions, pet theories and opinions. But it is derogative - to lend one's ear uncritically is to lose touch with the fact that Morgan's account of some event or another is 1) a defense of her conduct in that situation and 2) gives the impression that no other account is as valid as her own. Morgan assumes that her subjective view does not need to be justified. Her attitude is best described as a lesbian feminist conference in 1973, for example, is rife with dismissals and ripping on the quirks of other feminists who don't agree with her ideology. This is especially ironic considering her numerous complaints about movement infighting: "her 'I'm-more-politically-correct-than-thou-because-I-say-'s' attitude is precisely what engenders unneeded movement tension."

From sparkling rhetoric to dripping confessional rants, Going Too Far is probably more valuable for its historical perspective than for its theoretical brilliance. The Morgan Method is of the show-and-tell school of feminism which gathers its strength from the consciousness-raising technique of discovering a pattern of injustice in women's lives. Her piece Burbrucous Rituals is emblematic of this kind of approach. It lists in point form what "woman is":

Wondering why we can have live telecasts of the moon surface, but still no truly, simple, humane, safe method of birth control.

Being secretly afraid that you'll lose your virginity to a tampon, but being too afraid to ask anyone about it.

While identifying one's experience as the result of oppression is very important stage in order to feminism, it also has to be a commitment to overthrow such conditions and thus needs to analyze who and how the oppression operates within the social system. The author Morgan goes in this direction is to construct highly problematical alogans such as "Porn is the Theory, Rape is the Practice" and the like.

As an historical document of the early years of the second wave of feminism, Going Too Far is fascinating. It chronicles the difficult and painful birth of the women's movement that not only challenged "The System" but also the socialist, peace, and civil rights movements which claimed to offer their solutions to it. From the vantage point of the mid-eighties, the book gives us a sense of just how much has changed and how indeed we are to the vanguard of our older sisters.



# the Second Wave: the Feminist Canon

Archives for their generous loan of these Second Wave photos.

## The Dialectic of Sex, 1970

by Nancy Worsfold

Shulamith Firestone's 1970 treatise, *The Dialectic of Sex* both delighted and dismayed me. Reading the book for the first time fifteen years after it was first published, I was abashed both by the originality of her thought and the sloppiness of her scholarship.

The jacket of the book proclaims that Firestone has found the "missing link" between Marx and Freud. Although recently much feminist theory has been produced in a book of this sort, nothing that I have read has used an approach at all similar to that of Firestone. She proclaims women to be an oppressed "class" and seems to lift all usual analyses of the nature of class oppression and attribute the same features to women. She claims that the only possible venue for feminist change must be revolution - although she never specifies whether this revolution is to be actualized violently, sexually, domestically or intellectually. Firestone in fact incites two new oppressed classes, women and children. Her theory rests on the idea that signifiance social change can only come with a liberation of both.

Much of the book is devoted to describing the world in terms of a male-female hierarchy. I was often confused as to what she meant by "masculinity" and "femininity" as she never presented a consistent description. At one point she describes "science" as masculine and the "arts" as feminine and called for a reunion of the two in her revolutionary society. An interesting thought, especially as she envisioned a highly technological world, but... who does she know? It seems in her world, as in her all-male schools, I don't know. It seems to me that it takes an enormous amount of discipline to learn enough to be, for instance, a creative computer designer.

*The Dialectic of Sex* is worth a read, if only for its historical value in the development of feminist theory and (as) science fiction like vision. Unfortunately she tends to be a bit eager to draw conclusions, thus ending up doing damage to both Freud and Marx - she manages to avoid even ever mentioning the unconscious!

Much of her theorizing must be placed in the context of her time, because otherwise she can sound a tad ridiculous. She speaks of getting back to a basically pre-industrial society (a somewhat heterodox feminism), not necessarily centrally centred. Then, in the next breath she notes that people would probably choose heterosexuality because of the physical "fit". Similarly some of her claims about children's rights and the possibility of children's self-determination seem to belie a certain lack of experience with kids. At one point she even refers to the physical demands of children as "animal", I assume she has

forgotten that human beings can't even walk in their first year. Suffice it to say that her chapter about race relations is appalling. She invokes a metaphor of a nuclear family to describe American society accepting as gospel every racist stereotype imaginable.

Although Firestone's ideas are often crude, the book is an easy read filled with ideas and expressions of the sixties. Her optimism and energy carry what is now a very dated book.



## Heresies, Sex Issue, 1981

by Maureen Phillips

*Heresies: A Feminist Publication on Art and Politics, Sex Issue*

This Sex Issue of *Heresies* is a thoughtful and provocative collection of prose, poetry and graphics that examine the relationship between feminist and female sexuality. There may ways, it is the forerunner of some recent anthologies, *The Powers of Desire* (ed. Saitow, Stanzell, Thompson) and *Pleasure and Danger* (ed. Carole S. Vance). While the Sex Issue does not directly answer the age old question "what do feminists do in bed?", we do learn a great deal about what happens when we attempt to take, talk about, sex seriously. It seems we get sexed up, sexed out, sexed over, ... In fact, the women who produced the Sex Issue found it impossible to reach anything approaching editorial consensus and so offer a series of editorial statements. The editorial allude to or conflict within the collective which might explain why it took two years to produce the collection.

In attempting to break the silence surrounding female sexuality, this collection gives us an opportunity to hear voices that are often relegated to the margins. For instance a strong piece by Sandra Whistler asserts that cunniling is a valid sexual practice and not a one-way ticket to frustration and loneliness. In other words, sex need not be defined exclusively in relation to a partner or partners; the auto-erotic can be a legitimate choice.

And no, I'm lesbian, / argues Pat Califia in "Feminists and Sadomasochism". Califia whose other works include the lesbian sex manual *Sapphistries*, warns us against what she perceives as the moralistic and de-sexualizing tendencies of recent feminist politics. She criticizes the privileges of romantic love and status: "My sexual semantics differ from the mainstream. So what? I didn't join the feminist movement to live inside a Hallmark greeting card."

She also includes a piece about the effects of racist ideology on Black sexuality, incest and other forms of sexual coercion, scripting as a means to sexual empowerment, and a number of essays about the complexities of sexual representation. In the arts oriented material there is a repeated emphasis on the need for the development of a feminist aesthetic and/or an expansion of critical vocabulary that will provide a more comprehensive interpretation approach to feminist cultural products.

This to some degree parallels the dominant themes in the Sex Issue which is that of "desire"; most writers acknowledge that our understanding and articulation of a specifically female desire is a difficult project which is still in its infancy. The debate around desire remains a highly charged one, perhaps even more so now. This is not surprising, as the following editorial statement clearly summarizes: "Despite feminist insistence that all women share a basic sexual identity under patriarchy, it is not necessarily true that women share a uniform relationship to sexuality, sexual identity, fantasy, and sexual practice.... sexuality is our place of conflict and alliance."

# Alone and On the Inside: About being a Feministic Male

by Mike Irvin

There are two main barriers facing men who get involved in feminism. The first is tautological: they are not women. The second is that most well-informed, well-meaning or sympathetic feminist male is, he can never feel the oppression that fuels feminism as a political movement. The impossibility of full emotional identification makes it difficult for men to contribute ironically, though, men's inability to dictate, to be in control, is one of feminism's greatest 'lessons' for him.

Two current areas where men cannot be in control are abortion and the U of T Women's Centre. Sal Paradise, in his editorial "Who Am I To Say" in the New Edition, seems to think that confusion many men feel about abortion. With our society's strong Christian/humanist value system - one geared to men in its sexist bias - it is not surprising that a woman's reproductive freedom is not a clear cut issue for him. Paradise does, however, muddle through to the central point of the pro-choice platforms that end up in the structures that extend through the legal and medical establishments - are inherently unqualified to decide a woman's fate.

The second issue concerns the all-women collective at the Women's Centre. The common view held is that not enough men on the collective is in "reverse discrimination"; "besides, there's no men's centre, is there?" It is hard enough to conceive that this is the reason a Women's Centre is needed is that the men's centre is everywhere, embedded in a society where male privilege exists in both subtle and blatant forms. This ignorance of patriarchy is further

compounded by the feeling that a woman-controlled collective would be "anti-male". What men have to begin to realize is that women require distance from patriarchal structures to develop a "woman-identified" consciousness. Breathing space allows women new approaches to society, power and ideals, approaches which must be effected in order to have any effect in the context of our presently male-dominant sexual politics. Both men and women have to come to grips with their own sexism - ingrained in all of us - and that process

emotion, of obsessive self-sufficiency, into male and female bonding. Separatist feminism, of which the all-women U of T Women's Centre collective is a moderate off-shoot - stresses the building of a social order based on unity of women and the destruction of patriarchal, destructive ethical ideals. Both male solipsism and separatist feminism are limited and must bring the individual back to a society composed of both sexes; the "collective" theme of feminism, however, allows for a cooperation-based social ideal against one that

strengths: an emotional life, child-rearing, homemaking, even interior decorating that avoids beer stains. This, "new man", however, is often in the name of equality of the sexes, pushing for freedom from sex roles, but retains his male privilege and power. Particularly on an economic level, men evade the pressure of their "breadwinner" role but do nothing to combat the sex-role divide. The sex disparity between men's and women's average wage. The argument that both men and women are equally trapped by sex roles is not valid; patriarchy, men have the power to demand their freedom and women do not. In the growing tide of frequently misogynist solipsistic male codes of behaviour, "Male-Lib" may come full circle back to sexism with the added ploy: "Don't give us any guilt trips, girls, we're free men".

The traps the feminist male faces are many and deceptive. It is clear, however, that men cannot simply go with the flow, cannot just lip service to feminism and not take an active part in fighting the sexism he profits

will not always be without conflict or criticism; as Mary Kay Blakely says in *Pulling Our Own Strings*, "There's an absurd feeling that the women's movement must be the first movement in history to accomplish its goals without hurting anyone's feelings". This kind of distance, however, is far more constructive and unifying than the male equivalent of "getting the world from us". This branch of male solipsism that characterizes the far-away and "frugged individualism" of any Calvin Klein ad stresses the traditional separation of stoicism and

is competition/conflict-based. The Women's Centre is made to serve women and should be governed by them. What men must begin to realize is that women helping each other gets an example making sure he neither begins that can ultimately liberate men as well.

The second barrier facing men becomes too defensive when the feminist man is the one attacked. Feminism provides an example set by some "Male-Lib" groups. These are the kinds of men who, as American feminist-sociologist Barbara Ehrenreich says, change be critical and sometimes uncompromising in its statement of power. Perhaps the best example of this is from Robin Tyler's less-than-stunning revelation that conventional feminism came from a male, Robin Tyler, male roles and codes are a feminist hermeneutics. "If you're offered by anything, you

are on a surface level. Moreover, he must read tightly in his approach to feminism. The feminist man is the one who is attacked. Feminism springs from the deep well of the male oppression and the anger of American feminism. Those than sinners among women must reclaim traditional female needed it".

## In the Beginning there was a Sperm

by Scott Kerr

This article concerns two subjects: reproduction and language. It may seem ludicrous to say that these two subjects could have anything to do with each other, but there is something which links them both which are controlled by institutions created by males, legal and philosophical institutions which have developed in disturbingly parallel ways.

Mary O'Brien, in her book *The Politics of Reproduction*, claims that women's oppression stems from two thinnest economic forces and the idea of "paternity". She shows that the second factor is a myth perpetuated by male thought. Let's say a woman gives birth to a child. If any of her male sex partners claims to be the father, he can't be sure that the mother didn't have sex with another man around the same time that he had sex with her. O'Brien maintains that marriage as we know it was originally (and still is) an institution enforced by men to ensure that each husband could think of himself as being the "true" father, discouraging wives from having sex with other men.

In prehistoric times, the idea that sexual intercourse produced pregnancy was long after the dawn of our species. But as soon as it was discovered, men realized that a child could potentially be "conceived" in some way to an

individual man rather than solely the mother, and this produced insecurity. Each man felt the need for some sort of guarantee that his children's partner(s) were "his own" and not the result of sex with another male. This certainty was ensured by the enforcement of monogamy for women. As well, within this institution the children of a married woman became the property of the husband.

Our society traces descent according to the father by giving the child the last name of the father. We went to show that this "name" is in fact what men have done to the entire realm we call "reality". In the Bible, Adam was given the task of naming all the animals, but men throughout history have always placed upon themselves to do far more than just "name" they have controlled all forms of representation, including language and philosophy. Thus the entire conceptual system of the Western World is only expressed in masculine experience and interests (e.g. it rationalizes women's subordination). Masculine philosophy names and categorizes the continuous flux of the material and experiential world (which has no natural divisions or categories), and it gives this system of categories the name of "truth".

Jacques Derrida, a French

philosopher of language, makes the radical claim that there is no necessary or natural connection between the words that a speaker utters and the meanings that a listener interprets. The parallel that I will draw here is this: Derrida is well aware of the "openness" of paternity, and he also feels that the separation of the words spoken from the way a possible father is separated from his sperm. These separations are accomplished by the processes of interpretation and reproduction respectively. The speaker cannot control interpretations and the potential father cannot be certain that he is the father of his wife's child. But the tradition of male

thought denies this state of affairs, with a few recent exceptions (Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud), and Derrida says that philosophical institutions since Plato have tried to tie words down by claiming that there is a "truth" out there to which these words correspond. Here lies the parallel between patriarchy and philosophy: during the time of ancient Greece, two major institutions were consolidated by men: (1) monogamous heterosexual marriage and (2) philosophical truth. If we are examining philosophy's traditional description of the truth in language, we will find disturbing echoes of the idea of "paternity".

Let's say a speaker is talking to someone else. In traditional philosophy, the speaker always assumed that the speaker's words are interpreted correctly the meaning intended by the speaker - the "speaker's" meaning. But in live experience, the interpreted meaning is not necessarily the meaning intended. The traditional male philosopher assumes, when he speaks, that the meaning to be interpreted is "his" meaning. He assumes this in the same way that the father assumes that the child of "his" wife is his child. But the speaker's words are at the mercy of chance, just as much as the male's sperm.

Of course, Western philosophy isn't satisfied with this state of affairs. To support the one-to-one relationship between the male speaker's ideas and the listener's interpretation, Western philosophical institutions since Plato have participated in a certain distinction between the "true" vs. the "untrue". Traditional philosophy has prided all that is "true" and rejected all that is "false", setting it aside as "second-rate philosophy". But in a "postmodern" society, "other" truth includes more than what is "false"; it also includes what is "poetic", "fictional", a "joke", a "pun", etc. In this case, after this line was drawn, philosophy became "unliterary" and



Kerr/Lib

# NETWORKING

Directed by Carrie Brown

Wednesday April 10

Eight Unseen

A show of sculpture by Kathleen Peer. Continues to April 30. Hours: Wed. 7:30 to 9:00; Thurs., Fri., Sun., 1:00-6:00. Spastics Gallery, 1114 Queen St. W. Tel: 521-1243

Thursday, April 11

Lesbian in Academia

Results of a research survey by Prof. Jerry Ward. Talk commemorating "Centenary of the admission of Women to UofT". Sponsored by the Lesbian and Gay Academic Society. 8:00pm Rhodes Foyer, Trinity College, Tel: 527-0674.

Marijuana and Quisance

Sponsored by the Usft. Conf. for a Women's Centre and Persons Women's Centre. Tickets \$1.00 at Ryerson. Toronto Women's Bookstore and the Usft. \$10.00. Forum 100, Mechanical Building, Usft. Info: 595-5879.

Friday, April 12

Women's Music/Women's Culture. Features Marion Wade, aappells folk singer from the U.S. See Change, original folk music and songs Sharon Eshkar and Re. Eshkar. New Player, Horse Cafe. Info: 501-2357

Saturday April 13

(continued)

Two Saturdays (April 13/14) of instruction with M. McElroy in the Bathurst and Bloor Area. \$25.00 to \$30.00. To register call M. McElroy 557-0171.

Sunday April 14

Wendo

Two Sundays (April 14/15) of instruction with M. McElroy in the Elgin and Sherbourne area. 10:00 to 1:00. To register call M. McElroy 557-0171.

Lesbian Tractrix

A performance reading with the author Jovette Marchezza and Gail Bell. Sponsored by the Toronto Women's Bookstore and the Women's Press. Free. 2:00 p.m. Info: 522-8744.

## PAPERWORK

WRITING MATERIALS AND OFFICE SUPPLIES

499 BLOOR ST. WEST  
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982-8810

Toronto, April 15  
Women's Cultural Network  
A forum for exchange of information on art projects and funding. For women's cultural organizations and individuals working in the arts. 7:30 p.m.  
655 Spadina Ave. Room 215  
Info: 592-0059

Toronto, April 16  
Discussion with Stella Mavrikakis.  
Sponsored by Women's Art Resource Centre. 8:00 p.m.  
#10, 940 Queen St. E.  
Info: 486-2030  
Kyriakakis' installation, "The first Time I Saw Johnny" continues at Gallerie #40 till April 27.

Anna Butmanis  
Original songwriter-keyboardist  
Also Wednesday, April 17.  
Free Times Cafe, \$2.00.  
Info: 947-1076

Wednesday, April 17  
Political Tongues Reading  
Conducted by Gail Bell and Susan G. Cole, 4:00-6:00, 9:00 p.m.  
A-Space Gallery, 204 Spadina Ave. Tel: 501-2247

Thursday, April 18  
Exil, Stow Cafe  
Featuring: Arlene Mantle, Lauri Bell and home Hall.  
New York Horse Cafe, 179 Danforth Ave.  
Tel: 481-8367

Reading  
Louise Thibault and Marguerite Anderson will read from their new books. Free. \$100.00.  
Toronto Women's Bookstore  
Info: 522-8744

Friday  
Cameron Heale, 408 Queen St. W.  
Info: 344-0411

Saturday April 20  
Demobilization  
Stop U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean. Speakers: Gregory Baum, John Donaldson and John Rodriguez. Sponsored by Toronto Anti-Intervention Coalition. Hours: Assemble and march from York Park (Queen St. E & Jarvis), 1:00 p.m.; Rally at City Hall. Info: 515-9799.

Monday April 22  
Ontario Open Screenings Six Days of Resistance  
Screenings of films and videotapes around the province that have no history of being submitted to the Ontario Censor Board. Continues to April 27. Times and locations TBA.

Thursday April 25  
Six Days of Resistance  
Films and videos by women.  
Gallery #40, 940 Queen St. E.  
Info: 486-2030

Saturday April 27  
Deconstruction  
Against Cruise Testing (ACT)  
10:30 a.m., Hall Demo.  
Rally at Queen's Park.  
Info: 712-0254

Linda Tillary and her Band  
A Moony Way production.  
Interpreted for the hearing impaired, wheelchair accessible, free childcare (call 527-6568 to reserve).  
Tickets \$7.50 advance/\$9.50 door at Toronto Women's Bookstore, DEC and SCM.  
Innis Town Hall, 2 Sasse Ave (at St. George).  
Info: 525-6568.

Monday April 29  
Vendo  
Six classes (April 29 - June 3) of instruction with T. Green in the Bathurst and St. George area.  
7:00 to 9:30 p.m. Call 784-1369 to register.

Tuesday, April 30  
Re-enactment  
A billboard project by Paulette Phillips mounted outside A-Space Gallery, 204 Spadina. Continues to May 16. Info: 384-3727

Wednesday, May 1  
Gem Fest '85 Opens  
A citywide festival of art exhibits, evenings of dancing, music, performance artists, and video artists that continues to May 25. For locations and details call 463-2030.

Thursday, May 2  
Bratty  
Horseshoe Tavern, 258 Queen St. W. Info: 506-4753.

Friday, May 3  
Unparallel Views  
A multimedia Lesbian art show sponsored by Branching Out Lesbian Productions. Hours: Wed., 7:00-8:00; Thurs., Fri., Sun., 1:00-6:00. Spastics Gallery, 1114 Queen St. W. Info: 531-1243.

Saturday, May 4  
Ronnie Gilber of the Weavers  
A Moony Way Production.  
Interpreted for the hearing impaired, wheelchair accessible, free childcare (call 527-6568 to reserve).  
Tickets \$8.50 advance/\$10.50 door at Toronto Women's Bookstore, DEC and SCM. Trinity-St. Paul's United Church, 427 Bloor St. W. Info: 925-6568.

Monday, May 5  
Pace Awareness Week  
Sponsored by Toronto Pace Crisis Centre. Raffle tickets available \$10.00 each or \$25.00 for 6.1, draw May 5. 1st Prize - \$354.65. 2nd Prize \$199.45, 3rd Prize \$21.22. For info and tickets call: 964-7477.

File Night  
Films on issues relevant to women will be screened as part of Pace Awareness Week.  
7:30 p.m., PWYC  
Location and childcare TBA.  
Info: 964-7877

Tuesday, May 7  
Hancy Drew  
Theatre Pascale Muralle  
Phone 351-2416 for details.

Wednesday, May 9  
Public Forum on Community Organizing  
An open discussion of strategies for action in Conservative, Right Wing Ontario. Part of TRCC Pace Awareness Week. Free. 8:00. Location, childcare TBA.  
Info: 964-7477.

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Thursday, May 9  
Self-Defense Course  
Sponsored by Toronto Pace Crisis Centre. Classes 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. continue to June 12. \$25. \$15 unemployed. Subsidy available. To register call: 964-7477.

Friday, May 10  
Foreign Affairs  
Women on, dance co-sponsored by Branching Out Lesbian Cultural Resource Centre and International Ga. Association Women's Caucus. Tickets at Toronto Women's Bookstore and Glad Day, and door. 277 College St. Info: 964-1575.

Open House at TRCC  
Talk to Toronto Pace Crisis members, visit their community library, and offer ideas.  
12:00 to 5:00 p.m.  
340 College St. #1  
Info: 964-7477

Saturday, May 11  
Queen's Dance  
Sponsored by the Toronto Pace Crisis Centre. Washrooms not wheelchair accessible. Tickets \$5.00 advance/\$6.00 door and PWYC. Childcare and ticket locations TBA.  
117 College St.  
Info: 964-7477

Thursday, May 16  
Anti-Censorship Benefit  
Lots of performers at this fundraiser to cover court costs. Sponsored by A-Space. Tickets \$7.00 advance/\$9.00 door. Bamboo  
Info: 364-2227

Saturday, May 18  
Runaway and Booksale  
10:00 to 3:00 at the Church St. Community Centre, 519 Church, Info: 503-2776.

June 30 to July 7  
International Gay Association (IGA) 7th Annual Conference  
A week of discussions, cultural events and late nights with participants from around the world. Location: University of Toronto. Info: 264-6320



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Tuesday/Thursday — 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Kerr, continued from page 6

unplayful. But why did classical philosophers make this distinction - why elevate truth? One reason might be maintenance of the difference between public (male) and private (female) realms. The first was, and still is, a serious world: the realm of business-war-power. The distinction, true/untrue also promotes masculine virtue (cleverness, control,astery - all necessary in the public realm) over the mystery of nature (the same nature that problematizes maternity). Indeed, men did not just draw a line, but forced all ideas and experience into this artificial dichotomy which allowed them to "control" nature through knowledge.

But what then is the status of "truth" for feminists? Not that we realize that the distinction between public and private realms is a coercive one (marginalizing women in the private), what is the status of the serious dichotomies of the public realm? Distinctions such as public/private and masculine/feminine are only ideas, but they do help perpetuate the economic, reproductive and sexual oppression of women. When feminists take apart these oppositions, what ways of speaking should they use? Certainly some are using a literary and playful discourse (Marxist, Dalai and French feminists) while others use a strictly serious way of speaking. What are the uses and dangers in combining these ways of speaking now? By combining them do we achieve a new form of knowledge that has always been written in both and neither of these discourses? Surely the best strategy is to exclude neither the two existing ways of speaking nor their combination.

SEC Independence, continued from page 1

counselors last year and its implementation has not been without its share of growing pains, triumphs and arguments. We no longer have two co-directors and various committee chairs to do the organizational work for us; we have a single co-ordinating committee, among others, and reach decisions by concensus rather than voting. The transition to this structure was aided by training sessions with collectives and how to run them, which were a part of this year's month-long counselor training program in October. The efficacy of the Centre's function as a collective was formally evaluated at the March 30 meeting, when we took stock of the entire year.

One aspect of the Centre has remained unaltered over the years: the peer-counseling centre we get. Each school year we respond to about three hundred clients. These are individuals and sometimes couples who visit the Centre (located behind the Admissions building off Donhead Street) by phone during counselling hours. Our counselling is unique on campus. What we offer is the latest information and counselling to your peers: different students on campus with the same concerns as you. We firmly believe that there are advantages to peer counselling in situations which do not require long-term professional assistance or professional expertise. With peer counselling the chance that the student will feel patronized or intimidated is lessened, as are the feelings of being processed

## RE-MEMBERING



by Carrie Brown

Isabel Stalker was born in Gladstone Township, fifty miles east of Toronto, in 1884. My great-grandmother spent all of her life as a farm wife catching only glimpses of 20th century technology as it developed. In her family with two brothers and a sister, she was independent at a young age. Her father was a ship's captain on the Great Lakes and spent extended periods of time away from home. To supplement their income, Isabella and her mother ran the local grocery store in Leskard.

To attend public school, the children had to walk to a neighbouring village. New roads through the woods which Isabel always claimed was a scary experience. None of the children went to high school. Her father had died mysteriously, in what is now thought to be aaulting at sea. Isabel and her mother moved south to Oroton. There she offered dressmaking services to the local to support herself and her mother, and quickly ran a small shop. Before moving to Oroton she had met her future husband, James Stewart, when he occasionally visited their store. In 1897, at thirty-three years of age, after her mother's death, she married James and moved to a home she called "Lindon Valley". The dress she wore she made herself. It was of the

tinyest size and covered in lace. She gave birth at home in 1901 to the first of her three children.

Three years later, they moved down the road to take over the Stewart farm from James' father. Willowdale was a mixed farm operation. Cream from the cattle was sent to the local creamery, geese and ducks and eggs from the chickens were also sold locally to make a living.

As a farmer's wife, Isabella played a crucial role which involved looking after the children, feeding and clothing the family, and tending to many of the farm chores. This may, at first glance, appear relatively easy.

With the demands placed on my great-grandmother and other women like her in the late 1800's and early 1900's were enormous and, in this case, lethal.

Without the luxuries of electricity and running water, what today are mundane tasks were then time and energy-sapping burdens. On washday, Mondays, water had to be carried from the cistern (a reservoir that caught rainwater) by the bucketful to be heated in a boiler on the woodstove. The laundry was scrubbed by hand using a washboard and tubs. Before being hung to dry, excess water was squeezed out of the clothes by running them individually through a manually operated

wringer.

Other chores included tending the chickens and to her poultry, feeding them, collecting the eggs, carrying buckets of water and at Christmas killing, plucking and cleaning the geese, for sale. Their down was used to make pillows. Isabella was expected to lend a hand at milking the cattle, and churning out a tub of cream a day a week or more was set aside for baking bread, buns, cakes and pies. In addition, Isabella planted and tended a vegetable garden. In the fall, she would can tomatoes, jams and preserves from scratch.

Isabella had been a good cook, winning first prize for her apple pies at Oroton Fair. Once a year at harvest time, she had to go to town with men who were threshers who separated the oats from the straw with their threshing machine. She would prepare a huge roast, potatoes, vegetables, gravy and apple sauce, all on the wood stove.

Isabella was also known in the community as a good nurse. She tended her husband for six sleepless weeks through typhoid fever during the 1912 epidemic. She was a midwife for the neighbours on a few occasions.

Home-birthing was not a choice but a necessity.

Aside from domestic responsibilities, Isabella attended the Presbyterian Church regularly and was one of the founders of the local Ladies Aid. During World War I she found time to participate in the Red Cross by knitting socks for the soldiers overseas, though she didn't think much of the fighting.

Isabella travelled little during her life. She spent the occasional weekend in Peterborough or Toronto and took the train to Port Hope at Christmas to shop. With little else from the tool that helped clean all of her waking moments, my great-grandmother suffered a stroke in 1923 while cleaning the stovetop. She died two years later of high blood pressure at the age of 85, leaving a husband and her three children, one of whom now claims:

"She was a kind of slave for us".

## Ingrid MacDonald's

### Dear Enigma Person,

Dear Enigma Person:

Years ago, I came back in girl's school, my friend interrupted my light class and myreaking love was stung. God is into love after all, she said. This run replied with an incensed and sorrowful place, inciting my friend to brave herself against the overtures of sweet voiced men who would lead her down the Garden Path, down her, and then abandon her in her shame.

This is a long way behind me now, but I was reminded of the dear sister's words recently upon reading a modern feminist exhortation regarding the perils of certain sexual acts as they serve to obstruct the path of women's ultimate liberation. It seems to me ironic that the same bedroom habits which disqualify me from religious pursuits, are now heralding my own exile from the feminist camp. Please share your thoughts on this.

Signed, Let's Get Real

Goodness, what a cheeky friend you have, imagine asking this just such a fresh question. You must be part of this younger generation because which I've heard so much. Your problem is delicate because it requires a sense of the relativity of the world. To be sure, no one will always be bad, nor another always good. To be sure, as well it will be a snowstorm in July the day that the Enigma Lady recommends abandoning sex as a solution to an exciting and gravest of troubles. To be sure there is good sex and bad sex, but I am not sure I know the difference between the two? Do I think it must be left to individuals to have the courage and the honesty to decide for themselves. We all make our own beds in this movement, we all lie in them too.